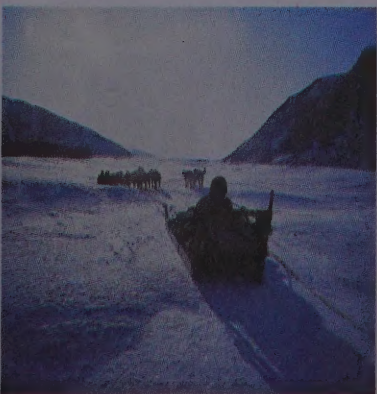
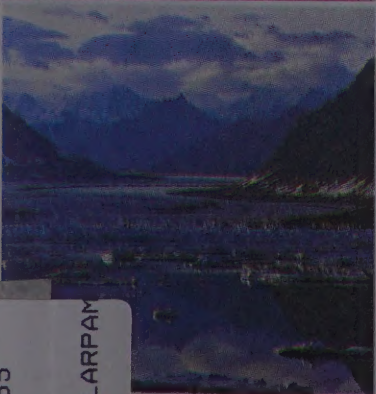
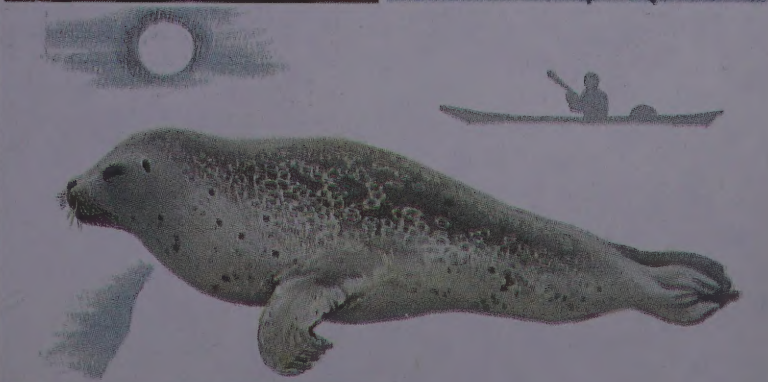
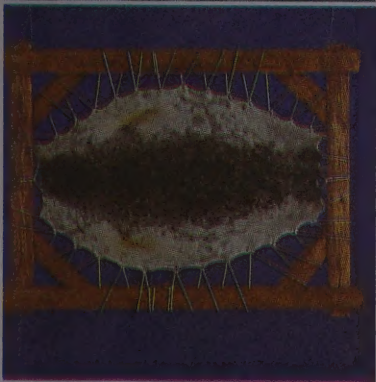
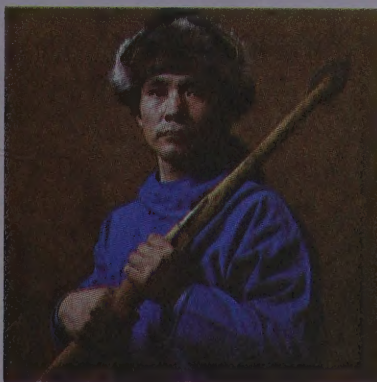


Greenland Seals

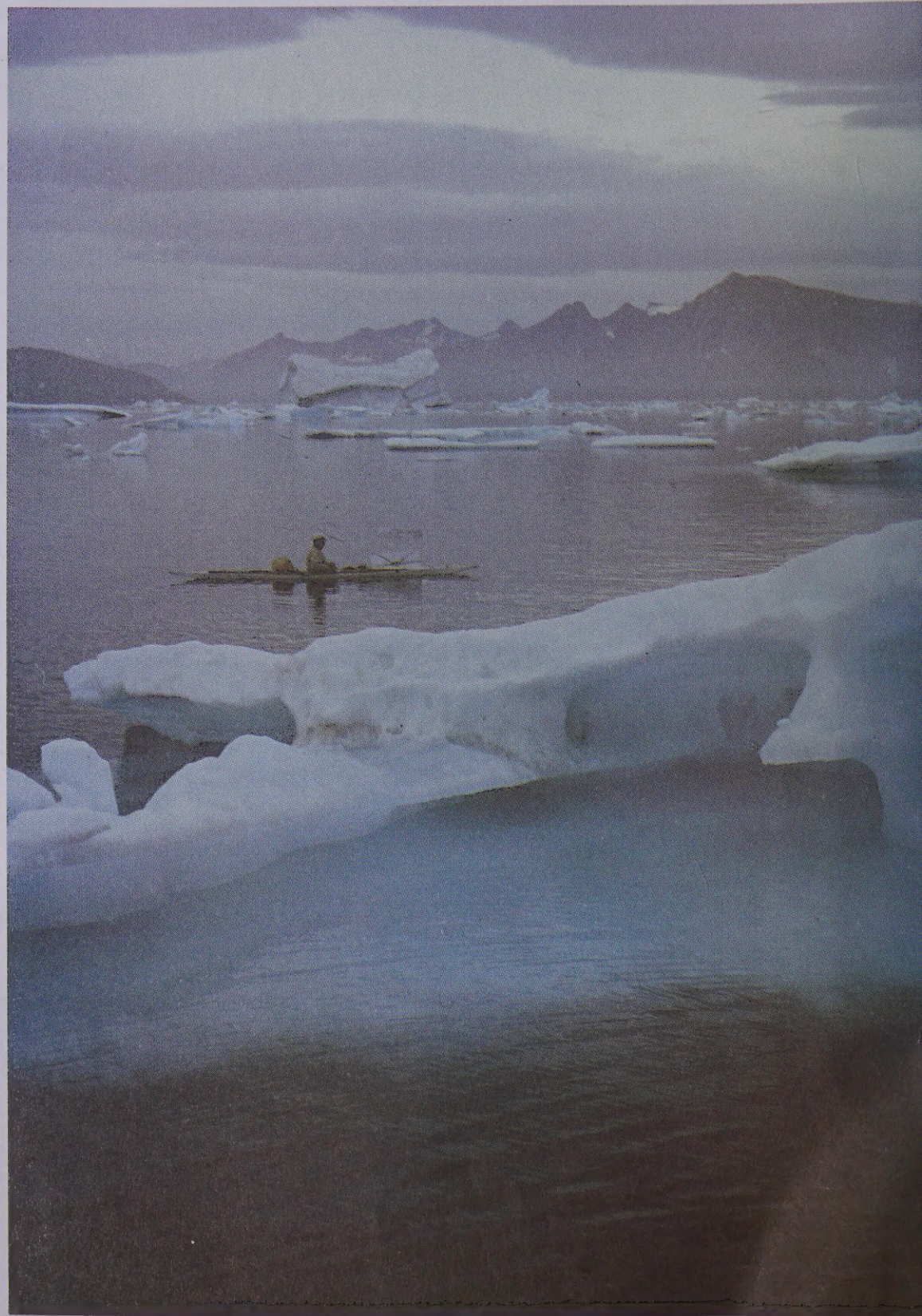
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GREENLAND – the world's biggest island – covering an area of more than 2 million square kilometres, is situated in the Arctic region. 80% of the island is covered by a 3-kilometer-thick ice cap. Settlement is only possible along the coasts, where a narrow ice-free zone will allow habitation. As climatic conditions make forestry and farming impossible, the population's primary source of food and income comes from the sea. Only in the southernmost part of Greenland is sheep-farming possible and to a very limited extent.

In South West Greenland of to-day, the principal occupation is cod-, shrimp- and salmon-fishing, but in the other regions of Greenland where these species are non-existent i.e. in North West Greenland and East Greenland, the population's existence is based on the old hunting occupation with all its traditions. Seals are the main catch, but small whales and walrus are also taken in the northernmost Thule. The principal occupation for more than 10.000 people is the seal hunt.

Many years' campaign against the hunt of seal pups has landed the Greenland seal hunters in deep trouble. The campaign conducted has had the negative consequence that world opinion is turned against the use of sealskin in general, and heavy price drops have been the result. The seal hunter's possibility of earning a living has been reduced, and this has happened at a time where consumer prices are increasing violently and will go on increasing due to the current inflationary rate.

The seal hunter's is livelihood indeed mainly based on marine resources, but cash is essential to buy fuel, guns, ammunition and other necessities – and this is where the seal hunter is most vulnerable. The consequence may be that the hunter as breadwinner will find it so difficult to make ends meet that many will be thrown upon public assist-

ance, which is a humiliating prospect for most hunters.

The Greenland seal hunt with all its traditions is an integral part of ancient Greenlandic culture. For thousands of years, the Eskimos, including Greenlanders, have lived by hunting seals from kayaks in the summer and from dog sledges in the winter. The most able hunter – the Great Hunter – has always been respected as pioneer encouraging local hunters to gradually qualify themselves for the title of "Great Hunter" to the benefit of the entire settlement.

So it is of utmost importance to these people that marketing possibilities are recreated for their sealskins, being the only product to provide them with sufficient means to live a decent life.

It should be added, that the much disputed hunt of seal pups does not take place in Greenland, and therefore the campaign conducted is extremely unjust to the Greenland hunter.

Furthermore, the Greenland seal hunt does not in any way endanger the seal stock. The ratio of seals available to seals caught shows that the take is very small viz. 70.000-90.000 adult seals a year. The Greenland seal hunter is very naturally more than interested in protecting the seal stock, being his only basis for existence as well as that of his descendants.

This is an appeal to people all over the world to start wearing sealskin again. Please wear sealskin-coats and help guarantee the continued existence of the Greenland hunter.

L. E. Johansen

*Lars Emil Johansen
Minister of Trade and Industry, Fisheries
and Hunting.*

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The Royal Family of Denmark wears Sealskin from Greenland

In our opinion, there is nothing environmentally wrong in wearing sealskin from Greenland, says Her Majesty Queen Margrethe the Second of Denmark and His Royal Highness the Prince Consort of Denmark, who is also President of the World Wildlife Fund in Denmark. - The Greenland hunter community has become the victim of unfair international propaganda.

The Royal Family of Denmark wears sealskin from Greenland. Her Majesty the Queen has a sealskin coat and H.R.H. the Prince has a sealskin vest. H.R.H. Crown Prince Frederik and H.R.H. Prince Joachim as well as their cousins

from West Germany and England all have sealskin-anoraks.

This is no coincidence. The Royal Family wants to show the whole world that it is not wrong, neither it is unkind to animals nor contrary any moral code, to wear sealskin from Greenland.

The Royal Couple has looked carefully into the matter, Her Majesty as Queen of Denmark and also of Greenland and H.R.H. the Prince as President of the World Wildlife Fund in Denmark. Their conclusion is that it is both right, justifiable and warm to wear sealskin.

Unfair Propaganda

If the question is put to the Royal Couple, the answer will be that the Greenland hunter community has fallen victim to unfair international propaganda, and that there is no environmental reason for op-

posing the seal hunt in Greenland.

And the Royal Couple will go on to tell you that seal hunt is part of Greenlandic culture and traditions. It is indeed the hunter's very basis for existence, and seal hunt in Greenland is regulated and controlled. None of the seal species in Greenland are endangered, and Greenlanders eat seal meat and seal skins are a source of income to them.

The Royal Couple will tell you that it full well knows the importance of animal protection, and that the wearing of sealskin coats in no way is inconsistent with an attitude of consideration for environment and animals. The Royal Couple says that the hunter needs a hand, because he has been hit unreasonably hard by misplaced international opinion.



The Royal Couple finds that the Greenland seal hunt has become an innocent victim of international propaganda.

Her Majesty the Queen talking with Rie Skjøtt of "Eskimo Pels" in Narsaq.

Visit to Greenland

The Royal Couple knows exactly what it is talking about. Greenland is the preferred destination, and Her Majesty the Queen is known for her wide knowledge of Greenland's history, culture and current problems.

As late as in the summer of 1982, the Royal Family visited Greenland travelling from north to south and from east to west on the more than 12.000 kilometer-long journey, part of it onboard the Royal yacht "Dannebrog".

The Royal Couple visited many hunter communities from large towns to small settlements, visiting hunting grounds and talking with the hunters about their problems.

The leading Greenlandic politicians of the newly introduced Home Rule confirm that the hunter occupation is threatened, and that misplaced solidarity with the animals is about to ruin one of the world's early cultures based on a life of harmony with nature.

Greenland Sealskin

During the visit to Greenland, the Royal Family also paid a visit to 2 production plants making sealskin coats.

"Eskimo Pels" in the South Greenland town of Narsaq, with around 1800 inhabitants, has a workroom where 15 women are employed. Here old tradition and modern sewing machines meet, and "Eskimo Pels" has a substantial export.

- What type of sealskin is this? the Queen asked, pointing to the large piles of skin in the workroom.

- We mostly use the skins from Ringed Seals, our local Greenland fiord seal, Tage Schjøtt answered, who manages "Eskimo Pels" together with his wife Rie.

H.R.H. the Prince touched one of the skins saying: - It is indeed very nice and smooth.

"Eskimo Pels" was founded in 1976, and has lately experienced marketing difficulties as a result of the general attitude in Europe towards seals and sealskins.

Greenland's Tannery

In 1981, the Greenland Home Rule Authorities and some other partners bought a tannery in the South Greenland town of Qaqortoq (Julianehåb), and the plan is that this tannery is to take over the tanning of all sealskins from Greenland in the course of the 1980s.

The Royal Couple visited the tannery and the workroom, following the entire meticulous process that sealskins undergo and carefully examining the various types of sealskin - all from adult seals. The visit ended by being a royal fashion show, as the Queen bought a sealskin hat with Arctic fox-trimmings and H.R.H. the Prince bought a sealskin vest. The Premier of the Greenland Home Rule Government, vicar Jonathan Motzfeldt, being a first-class hunter himself, also bought a sealskin vest.

The Royal Couple left nobody in doubt: wearing sealskin from Greenland is a good idea! .



The Royal Family also visited the Greenland cannery and admired the many different sealskin



H.R.H. the Prince tried on a vest from the workroom and bought it on the spot.

Seals in Greenland

*There are 5 different seal species living in Greenland.
None of these are endangered.*



The Ringed Seal

The Ringed Seal provides the Greenlander with all the necessities of life: meat for food, blubber for heat, and skin for clothing.

The Ringed Seal is the marine mammal being best adapted to the Arctic life both during summer and winter. It is capable of keeping its breathing holes open in spite of the ice being above 2 metres in thickness. The Ringed Seal can thus live the entire winter below the compact ice in and by Greenland.

The Ringed Seal is common all over Greenland, but the largest number of seals are living from the northside of the Kane Basin to the Disko Bay in south, and from the Julianehåb Bay south of the Cape Farewell and along the coast of East Greenland to the North East bend, however fewer in number from Illoqqortoormiut and going north.

The seal has a pup a year. It is born in a seal den, an ice nest above the breathing hole. This hole is expanded to enable the seal free passage, and then a long nest is dug into the snow drift - its dimensions being about 3 metres long and half a meter to the roof.

The Ringed Seal keeps several breathing holes open, while the winter ice remains in the fjords and along the coast. In spring, the seal will expand its breathing hole and haul itself up on an ice floe to sleep in the warm afternoon sun. Should

the breathing hole freeze up, while the seal is above water, it will move across the ice.

The Ringed Seal's constant presence has made survival possible along the coast of Greenland. It supplies the population with all the necessities of life: meat for food, blubber for heat, and skin for clothing.

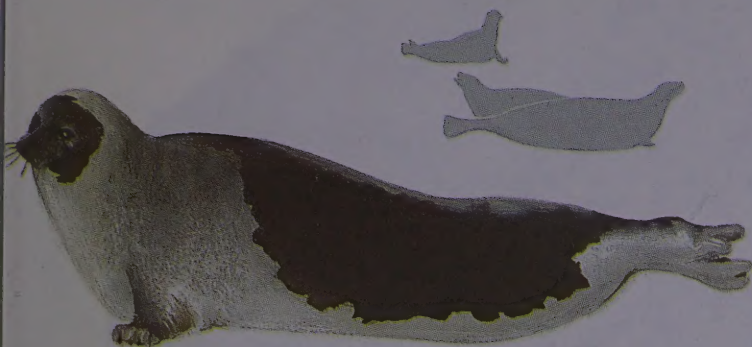
The Greenlanders have given the Ringed Seal many names, each name picturing the various characteristics of the seal: swimming, sleeping, migrating, by its breathing hole, in heat, moulting, its sex, age etc.

The Ringed Seal living by Greenland is protected in the Melville Bay Wildlife Reserve and in the world's largest natural reserve: the North East Greenland National Park.

The Ringed Seal is numerous in the entire Arctic region. The catch in Greenland fluctuates with the ice conditions.

An annual average of 70.000-80.000 sealskins are sold, and there is quite a substantial domestic consumption of sealskins.





The Harp Seal

The white seal pup has no Greenlandic name, as it has never been seen by Greenland.

The adult Harp Seal has saddle-like black side- and back markings. Canadians compare these markings to a harp and call the seal "Harp Seal". Its coat changes from the all "white coat" of the pup to the silvery-grey coat of the adolescent seal with its blue-grey back and then again to the black spotted saddle-coat of the adult seal. The white pup has no Greenlandic name, as it has never been seen by Greenland where only the adult seal comes.

The Harp Seal is numerous along the edge of the floating ice. Together with the Hooded Seal, the Harp Seal is a typical migratory seal seldom seen by Greenland during winter.

The Harp Seal does not breed by Greenland, but in The Gulf of St. Lawrence, off the coast of Newfoundland, off the Jan Mayen Islands and in The White Sea. The western breeding grounds are of most importance to West Greenland.

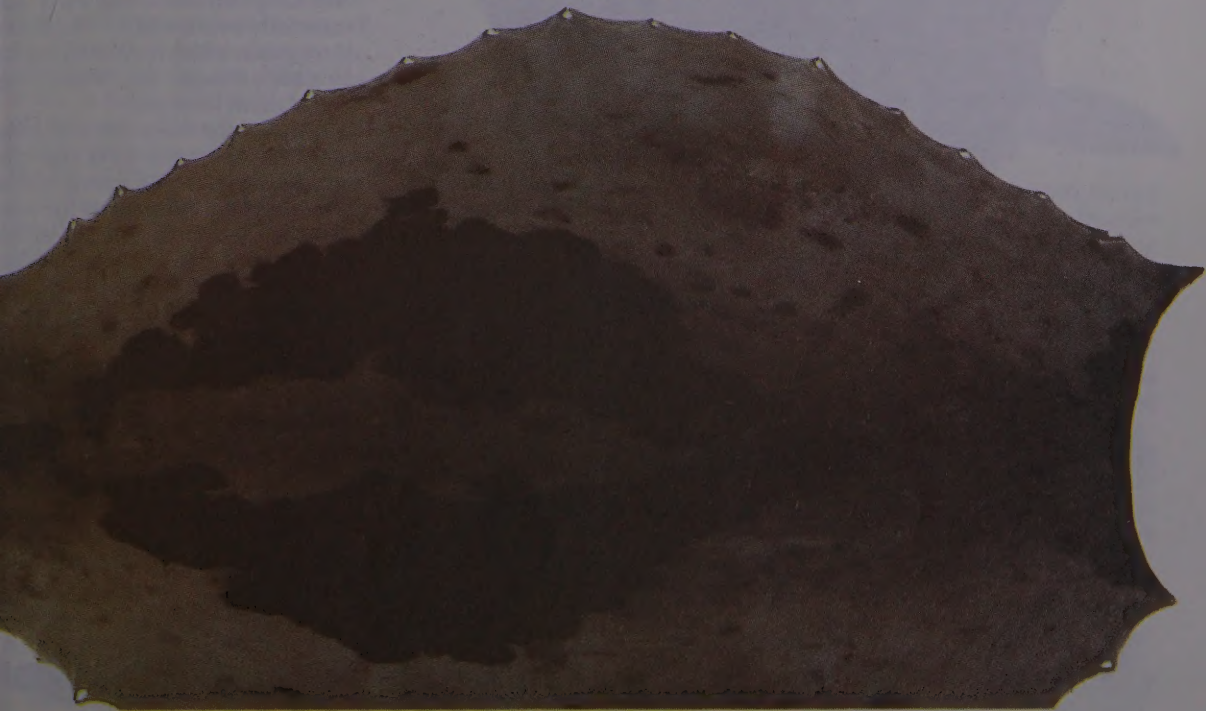
On the Newfoundland grounds, the pups are born from the end of May till the beginning of March. The pup has a white, furry coat: "white coat". When it is one month old, its coat changes into blue-grey with a light-coloured belly and so-

me spots. It will go into the water to look for food. The first seals come from Greenland in early-May. From October till February the seals migrate back to the breeding grounds by Newfoundland.

The Harp Seals, staying off the coast of East Greenland during summer and autumn, breed by the Jan Mayen Islands. The breeding period is about one month later than on the other grounds.

Just like all other species of seals, the Harp Seal has a variety of Greenlandic names changing with its age, size and skin markings. The young seal is called *aataavaraq*, the one-year-old *aataatsiaq*, the two- and three-year-old *allattoog*, the four-year-old starting to sport black side-spots *allattoorsuaq*, and the adult five-year-old seal *aataarsuaq*.

Compared with the commercial foreign seal hunt, the Greenland sealers only catch few seals along a very vast coastline. The annual catch of adult Harp Seals in Greenland is under 10.000. International quota systems have been introduced to restrict the seal hunt on all hunting grounds. The Harp Seal is, however, not one of the endangered species.





The Bearded Seal

In earlier days, the intestines were used for windows.

Bearded Seals are found on the continental shelves of all Arctic countries, but nowhere is it very numerous.

The Bearded Seal may be seen off all the coasts of Greenland and in the floating ice. It has a blue-grey or brownish colour.

The Bearded Seal is very valuable to the Greenlanders both because of its size, a weight of up to 300 kilogrammes is not rare, but especially because of its tough and strong skin which may be cut up into sledge straps, dog traces, dog whips, float lines etc.

Whole skins are sewn into summer tents, in earlier days also into kayaks, umiaks and kamik soles. The intestines were used for windows in the sod houses. An efficient hunter's wife can split the skin from a Bearded Seal into 2-3 thinner skins.

The annual catch of Bearded Seals in Greenland is at the most 1.000, and this species is in no way endangered.





The Hooded Seal

The Hooded Seal's belly and intestines filled with pieces of meat and blubber, berries and various plants from the mountains was considered a delicacy in Greenland in earlier times.

The Hooded Seal has 3 known large breeding grounds and one small all situated in sea ice areas viz. northwest of the Jan Mayen Islands, in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, off the coast of Newfoundland and a more seldom used sea ice-area in the Davis Strait.

In the area west of Greenland chiefly on the Newfoundland grounds, the stocks are gathering in groups from early-March till the beginning of April. Here the seals are whelping in early-March.

The Hooded Seals east of Greenland are gathering in groups on the Jan Mayen-grounds, where whelping starts 3 weeks later viz. end-March.

The new-born seal pup has a beautiful blue-black coat with a light belly, a "blueback". When the seal is two years old, spots start to appear and at the age of three, it is full-grown and sexually mature. An adult Hooded Seal has a greyish colour with dark brown spots.

Just like all other seal species,



the Hooded Seal has also been given Greenlandic names applying to each age level. The male with a bladder on its nose has a special name, *naasaasalik* meaning "the one with a hat-like bladder".

The Hooded Seals by Greenland appear in herds, a "fat" herd and a "lean" herd. The fat herd returns to South Greenland with the field ice. From mid-June to mid-July, the seals shed their coats between Ammassalik and Iceland.

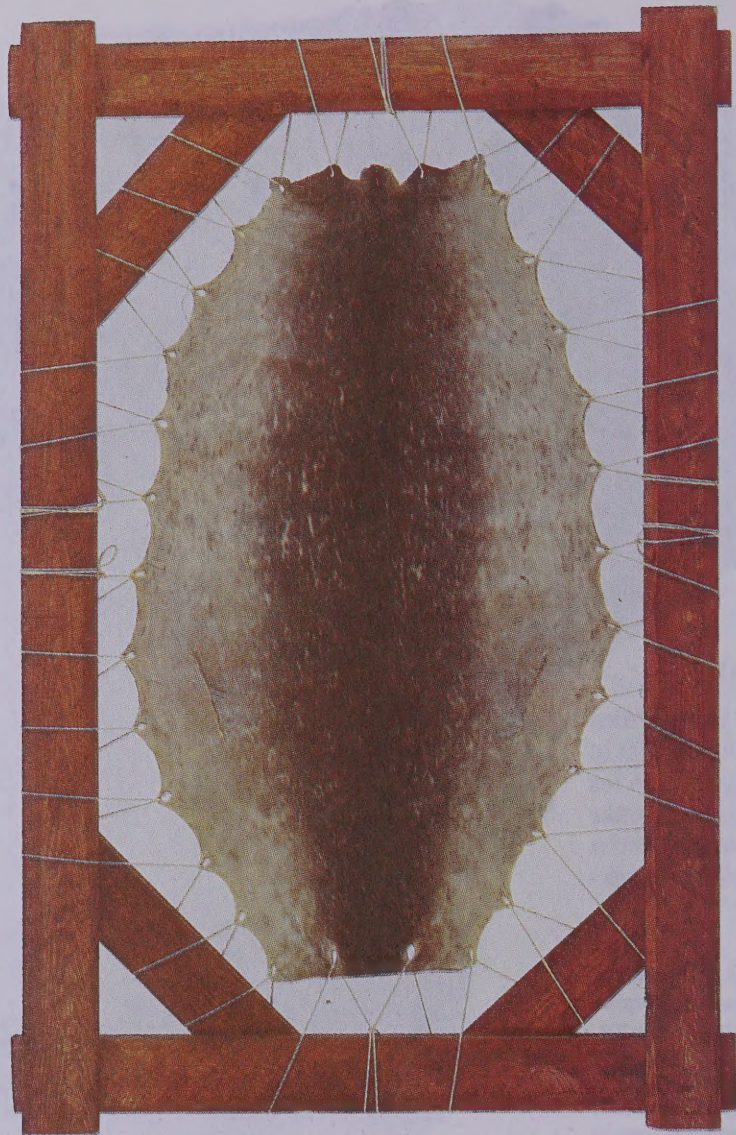
After moulting the Hooded Seals scatter, pass the Cape Farewell and travel north - the lean herd. On their migration west to the breeding grounds, they feed to regain their former strength.

Off the coast of South West Greenland, being passed by the

field ice, entire settlements moved out to the islands closest by in order to be sufficiently near the hunting grounds during seal migration. The situation of a Northerner settlement, Herjolfsness, all the way out by edge of the sea, indeed signifies that the hunt of Hooded Seals was of extreme importance to the Northerners about 1000 years ago.

The skin from Hooded Seals were earlier used for kayak-coverings, for tents and kamik-soles etc. The meat is very tasty. In former days, the bellies and intestines of seals caught were filled with pieces of meat and blubber, berries and various plants from the mountains and then kept for the winter.

The annual catch of Hooded Seals in Greenland is 3.000-5.000.



The Harbour Seal

The meat is the most tasty in Greenland.

The Harbour Seal is not so numerous by Greenland. It may be seen from Illoqqortootmiut (Scoresbysund) south of the Cape Farewell and along the west coast to Upernavik in the north.

In Greenland its preferred breeding grounds are south of Sisimiut (Holsteinsborg) and along the entire archipelago between Maniitsoq (Sukkertoppen) and Nuuk (Godthåb).

The Harbour Seal lives close to

the coast in the breeding period and avoids floating ice.

The beautiful and soft coat is highly valued for gala clothes, and the meat from the Harbour Seal is the most tasty in Greenland. This

species is protected from 1 May till 30 September. The hunt for young seals is free all year round, but exportation of skins is prohibited.

The annual catch of common seals in Greenland is 500.



Hunting - an integral part of Greenland life

by Bendt Frederiksen, hunter from the settlement of Juussuaq in the Municipality of Upernavik. The settlement has 140 inhabitants who are all living as hunters.

For many years, we have as Greenlanders been living as hunters of various seal species. The seal meat is our food, and its skin made into clothing and kayak coverings.

The country's climate and natural environment necessitate a diet of nourishing food. Therefore - like our ancestors - our diet must include seal- and whale-meat. We hunt small whales and meaty adult seals for our own consumption and to feed our dogs. Hunting is simply an integral part of our lives. Other people have not been able to survive in our country, because they have failed to understand the necessity of protecting nature and animals. And when using the word "protecting" I mean to leave adult seals with pups alone.

We have never had any rules telling us, how to hunt. Our ancestors have left us some rules which we follow, one of them being to exercise extreme caution in dealing with the animals. By way of example, there is an unwritten law that goes: never shoot a narwhale in summer migration, before it has been harpooned. If you do this, the animal would either go under or just be wounded. We do not go hunting just to kill.

We hunt seals close to where we live. The majority of our catch are Ringed Seals breeding on the ice off the coast. The Ringed Seals breed under the snow, and we have never nor would we ever try to take seal pups by digging in the snow.

Our Sealskins are spotted

Unlike the skin from a seal pup, which is yellowish-white, all skins from our country are spotted i.e. skins from adult seals. We mainly hunt migrating seals. If one year, there are very few seals, we only catch very few and in that way the size of our catch depends on the number of seals available.



The Greenlanders' basis for existence are the living resources of the sea

The Greenlanders' basis for existence are the living resources of the sea.

In the hunter districts, hunting marine mammals is a vital occupation. 20% of Greenland's population are living in these districts.

In the fishing districts, the catfish is an essential part of the population's diet.

In short, between 1/4 and 1/5 of Greenland's population is completely dependent on the catch to keep alive, and to the remaining part of the population the animals caught are of high nutritional value.



In spring, hunting seals sunbathing beside their breathing holes - uuttut. Here a shooting screen for the sealer proves very useful.



The seal, a Ringed Seal, is flayed right after being caught.

The Importance of Sealing

North Greenland

Avanersuaq Municipality, 800 inhabitants, 5 settlements with a total of 350 inhabitants.

The catch is the only basis for existence. The Ringed Seal is the most important catch, but Bearded Seal and Walrus are also of vital importance. Some Harp Seals and Hooded Seals are also caught.

North West Greenland

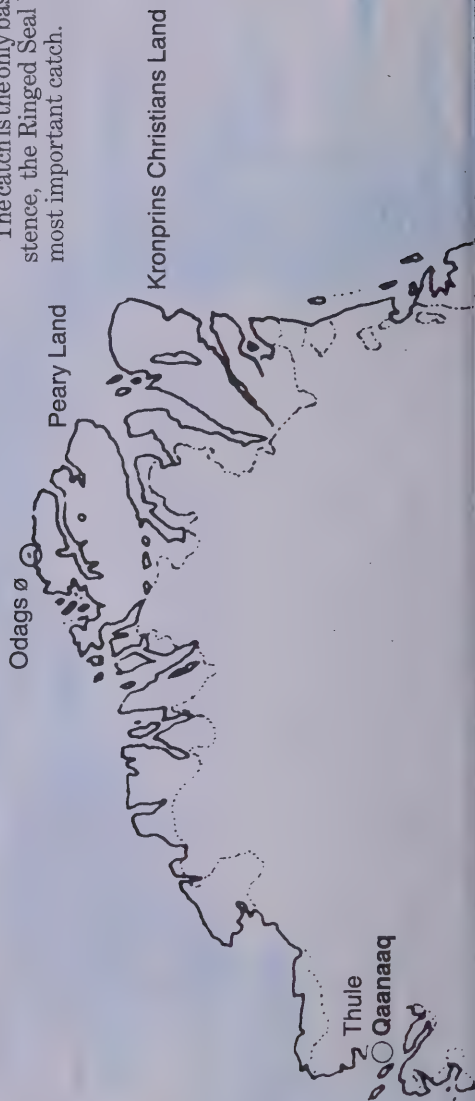
Upernavik- and Uummannaq Municipality, 4600 inhabitants, 17 settlements with a total of 2400 inhabitants.

Sealing is the most important occupation. The Ringed Seal is the most important catch. The Harp Seal and the Hooded Seal are also important during summer and autumn.

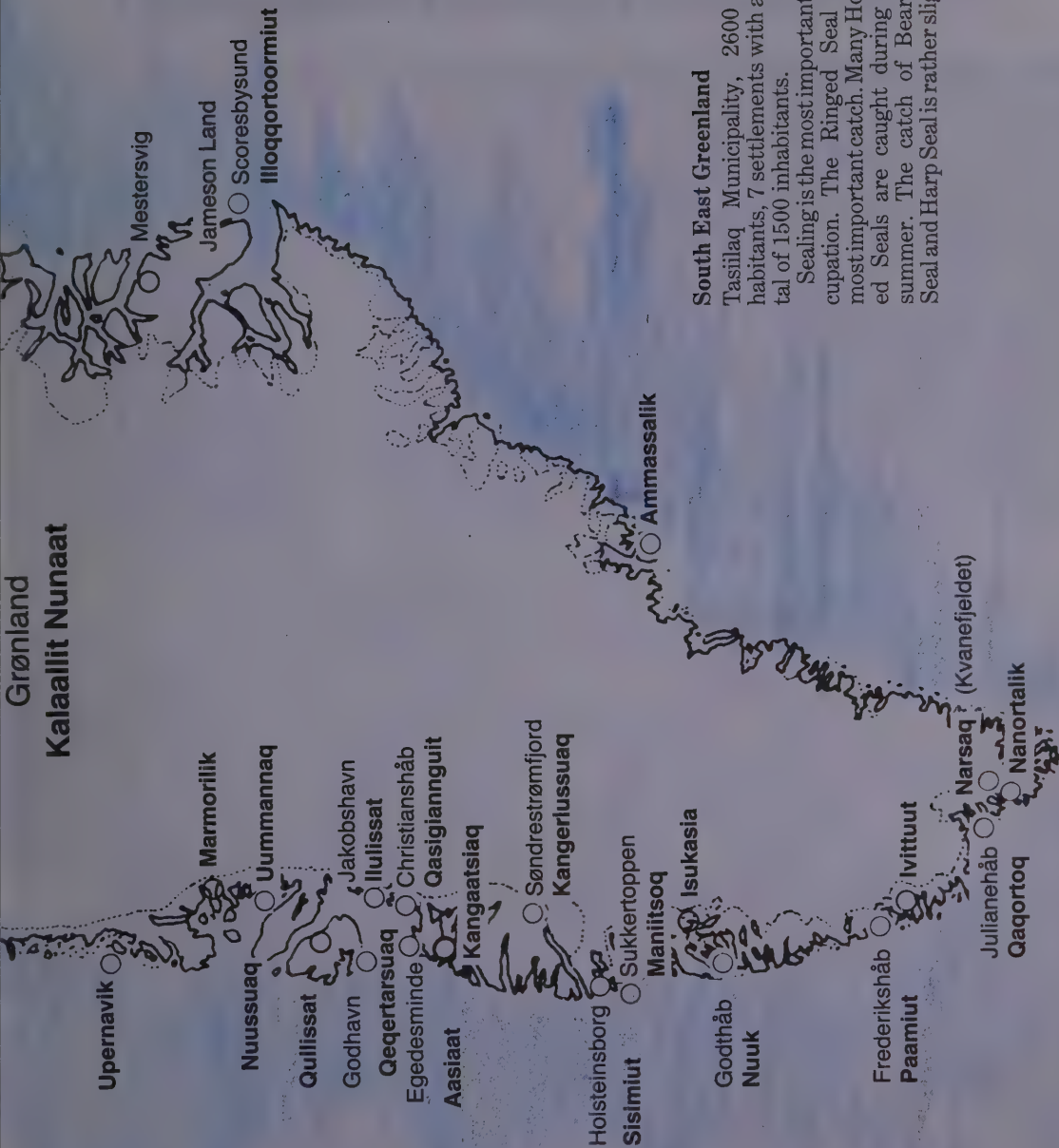
North East Greenland

Illoqqortoormiut Municipality, 500 inhabitants, 2 settlements with a total of 100 inhabitants.

The catch is the only basis for existence, the Ringed Seal being the most important catch.



Grønland Kalaallit Nunaat



Central West Greenland

The Disco Bay, Qeqertarsuaq, Ilulissat, Qasigiannguit, Aasiaat, and Kangerlussuaq Municipality, 11,500 inhabitants, 12 settlements with a total of 1700 inhabitants.

Sealing is an important supplement for the population in the town, and in the settlements it is the basis for existence. The Ringed Seal and the Harp Seal are the most important catch, the Hooded Seal and the Walrus being of less importance.

South West Greenland

Sisimiut, Maniitsoq, Nuuk- and Paamiut Municipality, 20,000 inhabitants, 10 settlements with a total of 200 inhabitants. Sealing is an important supplement.

South Greenland

Narsaq, Qaqortoq- and Nanortalik Municipality, 8000 inhabitants, 10 settlements and many sheep farmers with a total of 200 inhabitants. Sealing is an important supplement especially during spring and in early summer, where the Hooded Seal is the most important catch.

South East Greenland

Tasilaq Municipality, 2600 inhabitants, 7 settlements with a total of 1500 inhabitants.

Sealing is the most important occupation. The Ringed Seal the most important catch. Many Hooded Seals are caught during the summer. The catch of Bearded Seal and Harp Seal is rather slight.

Genuine Greenland Sealskins

The Royal Greenland Trade Department's tags and labels guarantee the origin of the skins.

The Royal Greenland Trade Department, the KGH, attends to all purchases and sales of Greenland sealskins in and from Greenland. The sealskins from Greenland are graded in Denmark according to size and quality and are then sold by semi-annual sealskin auctions.

At these auctions, buyers are offered tags and labels for pricing and sewing-in. This is a voluntary arrangement by which buyers – subject to a written declaration – guarantee that the tags and labels

will be used exclusively to mark skins bought by the KGH's auctions. Buyers must at the same time guarantee that the same procedure is followed, when the skins are re-sold.

It appears from these tags and labels that the skin in question is a genuine Greenland sealskin, that the skin is not from an endangered species, that the sealer has used the whole animal, that it is from an adult seal, and that only surplus skins are marketed etc.

Should you buy a sealskin coat with such a tag or label – do not feel that it is morally wrong. You are guaranteed that the skin comes from a seal caught by a Greenland sealer – a sealer living in harmony

with his natural environment and with no wish to exploit his only basis for existence.



Sealskins are graded according to quality and size in Denmark before being sold by sealskin auctions. It is

guaranteed that the skins are not from seal pups.

It is a hard job being a hunter's wife

Technological progress has made life easier for the hunter, but the hunters's wife has only been blessed with a gas cooker.

Two of the sons are asleep on the bed in the kitchen. They have been on utoq-hunt. On the floor are three still-warm seals. You have to step over them to get into the small blue house, where the family Ottosen lives in Illorsuit.

The hunter's job is done, and now the hunter's wife takes over. Else Ottosen bends over the seals. With efficiency and accuracy she sticks her knife into them, and in no time at all they are all flayed perfectly. The skins are soaked, the meat cut up and put away, the floor washed clean of blood.

This is an everyday activity, and this April-day her jobs are to flay seals, scrape skins, wash skins, stretch skins, do housework, cook, sew clothes and make coffee an endless number of times from morning till night.

In 1979, Else Ottosen all by herself took care of 600 seals shot by the family's hunters, as does she also manage to work at the settlement's small production plant where she cleans and processes Greenland halibut. She is furthermore a member of the settlement council, of the women's club, and for 15 years she has been part-time teacher at the school where she is a teacher of arithmetic, needlework and has special classes.

No development

Hunting has been rapidly developing during this century. Old hunting traditions still prevail, but the hunter's hard work has been eased by the petrol engine, the boat, modern firearms, the primus stove and the thermos. The hunter's wife, on the other hand, has not been blessed with similar technological advances, maybe with the exception of the gas cooker.

- True, very true, Else Ottosen nods and says that what she would like most of all, once the power sta-



tion is built in the settlement, is a deep freezer.

- Either one for the entire settlement to use or one in her own home.

- Is that the most important thing for you?

- Yes.

- What about running water all year round?

- Drinking water in the houses is not important. It is not worth the bother.

Else Ottosen goes on to tell that the women's club in the district has discussed the situation of the hunters' wives in the settlement at a district meeting, and they have handed over several proposals to the local government.

- But as production is more important than anything else it is always the homes that suffer, if there is much catch to take care of, she says.

Sharing the work

Else Ottosen does not feel that work is not shared evenly by men and women in the hunter families.

- We do share the work evenly, she says, and she is not afraid that young women will be leaving the settlements to settle in the towns because life is easier there.

- This was the case earlier, but all our girls have stayed in the settlement during recent years.

- Have you never wanted to become a hunter instead, to change roles and feel the excitement of

hunting and the good fellowship on the edge of the ice - instead of being tied down here in the settlement and in the house?

- No, I would not be able to manage, I would drift out to sea on an ice floe.

- Have you never wanted to go away and see something else?

- Well, once in a while I do go with my family on a trip. But apart from that, I never go away.



Else Ottosen comes from the settlement of Illorsuit in the Municipality of Uummannaq. The settlement has 140 inhabitants living from hunting.

Skin Preparation

It is a well-known fact that good-quality skins are in heavy demand, and that prices vary with the quality.

The seal hunter's treatment

of the raw sealskins is especially crucial.

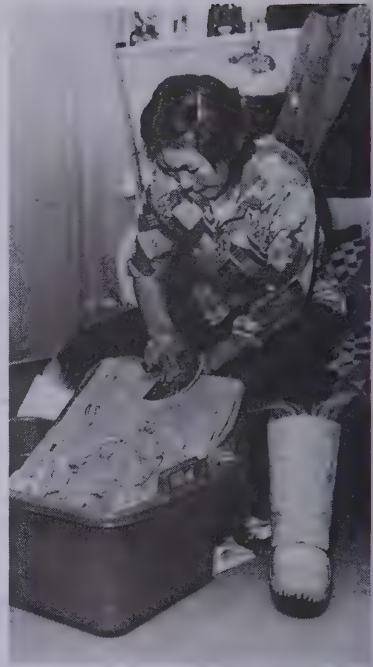
Photo-report from Quaanaaq (Thule) by Thorkili Nielsen and others.



The seal is flayed right after being caught.



To get rid of superfluous oil, the skin is washed after being scraped and a roller removes excessive water contained in the skin.



After the flaying and flenching, only a very thin layer of blubber remains on the meat-side of the seal. The remaining blubber is scraped off by means of a "ulo" (knife). This is done on a slanting wood board.

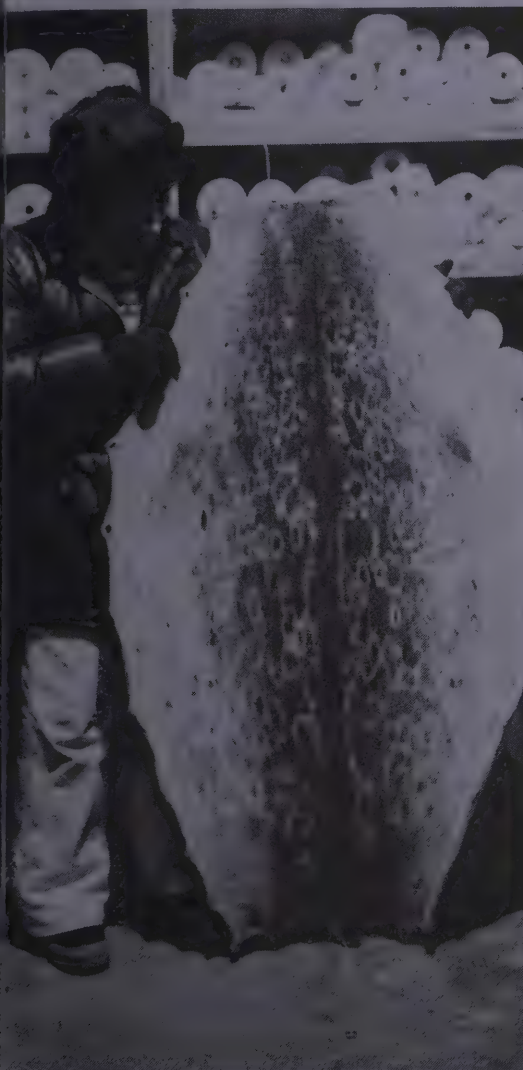




The skin is stretched in a square frame.



The blubber-side of the skin is cleaned of bits of meat.



Skins being purchased by the KGH, and then sent to Denmark to be sold by auction.



The skin is dried, and is now ready to be sold to the Royal Greenland Trade Department (KGH).



Sealskin auction.



Uusaqqak Qujaakitsoq

Indeed well-meaning organizations for protection of environment and animals, says the deputy mayor of the world's northernmost municipality.

Uusaqqak Qujaakitsoq is deputy mayor of the world's northernmost municipality, the Municipality of Avanersuup in North Greenland also known as Thule. The Municipality's sole basis for existence is the hunt, the Ringed Seal being the most important animal.

Uusaqqak is 33 years old, born and raised in a hunter community. He himself is hunter by profession, and he has at close range witnessed the unfortunate consequences of actions taken by outside bodies that have brought the hunter into a tight corner, and this should not

ave been necessary.

Uusaqqak says: - We are trying to co-operate with environmental organizations abroad to ensure future stability for the hunting occupation in Greenland. The campaigns conducted by these organizations against seal hunt in Canada have indeed been damaging to us, and we are not even involved. But we have gradually come to realize to what extent these campaigns have influenced the sale of our seal skins from adult seals.

Information necessary

Uusaqqak also stresses the necessity of extensive international information campaigns with a view to securing the hunting occupation for the future. - And I have already launched my own information campaign in a small way whenever and wherever it has been possible. At the beginning of the 1970's, I used my modest movie camera to take some pictures describing the hunter's daily life. These pictures may be primitive and unprofessional - for I have to reach for my hunting equipment when going sealing before reaching for the camera - but the film has been extremely well received when I have shown it in wider circles.



Our future depends on a satisfactory solution to the problems we are facing to-day

Uusaqqak knows the importance of cautious behaviour towards animals and nature. The animals cannot bear unnecessary hardships. Their surroundings must be clean and noiseless. If this is not the case, they will fly far away from the sealers.

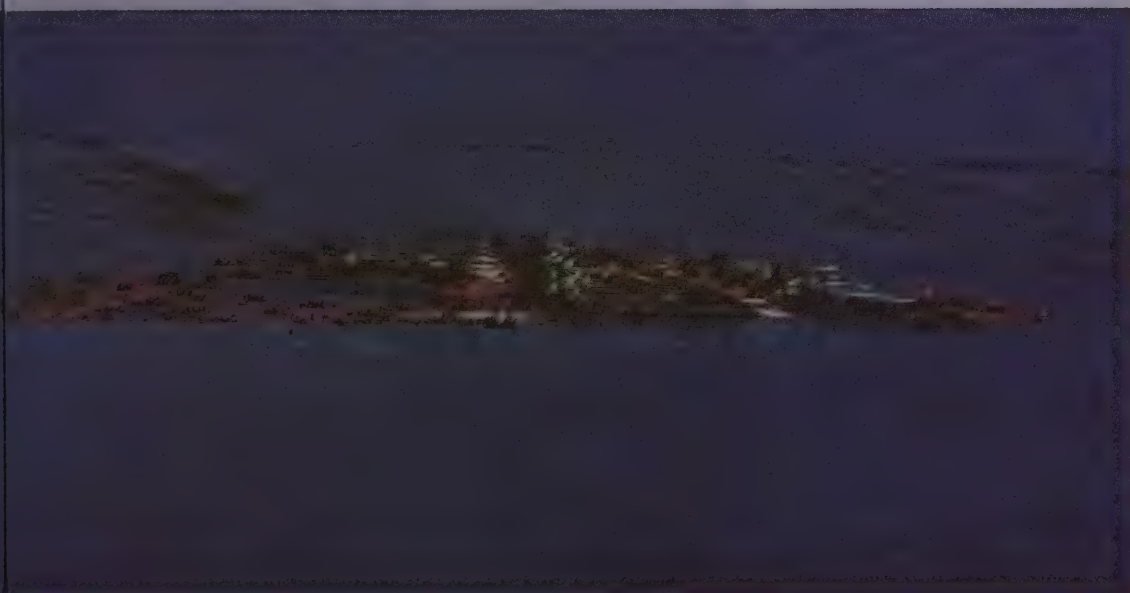
The municipalities have strict rules, especially applying to behaviour in natural environment - not least in the municipality where Uusaqqak lives.

The use of motor vehicles of all types are prohibited in some places during some month of the year. It is strictly forbidden to use snow-scooters when going hunting, and if they are actually used, it should only be as a means of transporta-

tion between settlements - only on the sledge route and only during some periods of the year.

The necessity of showing consideration for animals and nature has been accentuated by the fact that the hunters' income from the sale of skins have dropped in consequence of loaded anti-sealskin campaigns. These campaigns have been much too hard on us, for we only hunt adult seals, says Uusaqqak Qujaakitsoq.

- We have to look at the future with optimism, and must not be discouraged. But our future indeed depends on a satisfactory solution to the problems we are facing to-day, one of which is the misunderstanding generated by our traditional seal hunt, concludes Uusaqqak Qujaakitsoq.



The Inuit Society – a vulnerable environment

For thousands of years, Inuits and Greenlanders of today have been living in harmony with nature, – says one of the world's leading arctic experts, – and to protect the original natural environment the world's largest nature reserve has been established in Greenland.

– The Greenland hunter community is a vulnerable environment that must be protected –.

This statement is made by one of the world's leading experts on research into seals and environment in the arctic zone, Dr. Christian Vibe from the Zoological Museum in Copenhagen, Denmark, who is also actively engaged in the I.U.C.N. (The International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources) as well as in the World Wildlife Fund.

– It is tragical that the consequences of a well-meaning desire for international protection of endangered species has developed into a disastrous threat to one of the world's early hunter cultures –, says Christian Vibe, who has been especially engaged in research into animals living in the arctic zone by Greenland.

– The seal hunt in Greenland has never been endangering to the seal stock, and it is sad to witness that Greenlanders of all people – being just as dependent on and interested in protecting their animals as the farmers – have to pay for a growing international campaign against the hunt of seal pups that are not even living in Greenland, says Christian Vibe.

In harmony with nature

– For thousands of years, Greenlanders have been living in harmony with the arctic nature and their ancient traditions prescribing



them only to hunt what is necessary for food, clothing, heat and cash income. The Greenland hunters have a desire to protect their animals being the basis for their hunting, their personal dignity and independence as Eskimos.

With the aim of protection endangered environment, Greenland has established the world's largest nature reserve in North East Greenland as well as the Melville Bay-reserve, and there are many local conservation regulations in all the inhabited parts of Greenland, concludes Christian Vibe.

Several seal species in Greenland

Most people know very little about seals, explains Christian Vibe, – none of the 5 seals species nor the walrus living in Greenland are endangered by the hunt in Greenland, exclusively concentrating on adult seals. The Ringed Seal is by far the most important species. It is found all over the arctic zone, is very numerous and nowhere does the hunt endanger this species that for thousands of years has been the basis for Inuit-culture and helped hunter communities survive the frequent hard winters.

Greenland's other seal species: the Bearded Seal, the Hooded Seal, the Harbour Seal and the Harp Seal are only taken by a slight number. Commercial hunt of seal pups does not take place, as the Harp Seal breeding off Newfoundland is only a summer migrant and Greenland's own seals breed in several breeding grounds where commercial hunt is impossible.

We are all meat-eaters and grain-eaters, and as grain-growing is impossible in Greenland, Greenlanders are left with only one possibility i.e. animals. It is also important to point out that the hunter's livelihood is the seal – its meat is eaten and its skin sold to buy other vital necessities – indeed far less than any European would dream of being content with –, concludes Dr. Christian Vibe.

PANDA gives its OK to the Greenland seal hunt

The World Wildlife Fund is not against the Greenland seal hunt. – The Greenland seals are not endangered, and the general attitude has been one of unfairness to the Greenland hunter community.

The World Wildlife Fund, one of the world's largest environmental protection organizations, is not against the seal hunt.

We can definitely confirm that Greenland seals are not endangered, and that seal hunt does not in any way threaten the seal stock, says Bent Muus, Vice-President of the World Wildlife Fund, Professor of Zoology and co-author of a series of major scientific works on Greenland animal life.

The World Wildlife Fund does not oppose seal hunt in Greenland and it is indeed terrible to experience the negative consequences for the hunter community of an international opinion based on ignorance, says Bent Muus.

The Emotional Aspect of the Issue

In its global fight to protect endangered animal species, the World Wildlife Fund's Panda-bear is in more than 50 countries known to vouch for an environmentally-conscious protection of natural resources.

We oppose any threat to animal populations and natural environmental, says Bent Muus.

But unfortunately, we have to admit that many people feel so strongly about this issue that protection of animal life may have unreasonable consequences. The World Wildlife Fund knows that seal hunt in Greenland is a basis for existence and no threat, says Bent Muus.

A confusion of opinions

An environmentally-conscious attitude and a fight for the protection

of animal populations worldwide does not shut the door to a simultaneous support of seal hunt in Greenland.

It is sad to experience a confusion of opinions in so many cases, says Bent Muus, – The most probable reason is that many people only read the head-lines in the papers and lump all hunting together. Moreover, there are certain instances of very misleading and wrong propaganda.

The World Wildlife Fund emphasizes an attitude of objectivity and relevance. We believe that natural environment and its animal life is best protected if people know "harmful" from "harmless", when dealing with nature and animals, says Bent Muus from the World Wildlife Fund.

The Panda-bear

It is paramount to the Greenland hunter community – having for thousands of years been living in harmony with nature and its animal life – that any misunderstanding arising from the Greenland seal hunt be cleared away.

But the question is for many people: Is it all right to wear a sealskin-coat from Greenland while at the same time sporting a badge with the Panda-bear?

The World Wildlife Fund does not leave anybody in doubt:

It is indeed all right, and it would help remove some unreasonable misunderstandings, says Bent Muus.



World Wildlife Fund, Denmark, does not consider Greenland seals to be among the endangered species and regrets that Greenland hunter communities are threatened by the international campaign against the killing of seal pups in Canada.

Greenpeace does not oppose Greenland seal hunt

A regrettable combination of misinformation and ignorance has been of unjust consequence to the Greenland hunter community, maintains a representative of Greenpeace, the international environmental protection organization.

Greenpeace is known to be the more militant international environmental protection organization. In recent years, Greenpeace has carried through several militant and dramatic actions that have been extremely well covered by TV and other news media, and the organization is especially known for its colourful actions against the killing of seal pups off Newfoundland.

We all know the Greenpeace-

poster with the "babyseal". But does Greenpeace also oppose the Greenland hunt of adult seals?

The majority probably think so. It is, however, a misunderstanding. Greenpeace does not oppose the seal hunt in Greenland, and the organization regrets that its campaigns have had this unintentional, and extremely negative consequence for the Greenland hunter community.

- We have often mentioned this in our papers, but we also realize that very often only the head-lines are read, says Mikael Gylling Nielsen of Greenpeace in Denmark.

Off the track

Greenpeace in Denmark is the Greenpeace-organization of the total of nine that are most familiar with conditions in Greenland, and the Danish organization openly and frankly admits that there have

been some serious misunderstandings.

- We regret to say that the Greenland hunter community of to-day is threatened, says Mikael Gylling Nielsen.

- Has this been Greenpeace's aim?

- No, not at all.

- Well, what has happened?

- A regrettable combination of misinformation and ignorance as well as misunderstandings combined with a confusion of our campaign against the killing of seal pups and the Greenland seal hunt.

- Then Greenpeace does oppose the killing of seal pups?

- Yes, we strongly oppose the killing of seal pups off Newfoundland. I do not like the word "babyseals", it is such an emotionally charged word. The word "baby" should only be used with reference to human beings.

- Unfortunately, we must admit, continues Mikael Gylling Nielsen, vice-president of Greenpeace in Denmark, - that our campaigns have run off the track with unin-



Greenpeace regrets that its campaigns unintentionally have been of negative consequence to the Greenland hunter community.

tentional and unfair consequence for the Greenland hunter community.

Indian philosophy

- Can Greenpeace then confirm that the seal species living in Greenland are not endangered?

- Yes, they are not endangered.

- Does Greenpeace support the Greenland seal hunt?

- We do not accept any type of animal hunt, the entire Greenpeace-movement builds on Indian philosophy saying that care must be taken not to over-exploit natural resources.

- But is it not this very tradition that the Greenland hunter community follows?

- It definitely is.

- Does Greenpeace understand that seal hunt very often is the Greenland hunter's only basis for existence, and that protection of nature and its animal life is an integral part of old Eskimo-traditions?

- Yes, we understand this and respect it, and therefore we are extremely unhappy about all the misunderstanding.

Greenland hunters must survive

- Greenpeace is not against the original population's survival in harmony with nature, Mikael Gylling Nielsen underlines. - We are, however, one hundred per cent against cold-blooded and commercial exploitation of natural resources.

Unfortunately, many people have confused these issues, Greenpeace states.

- Hoping to straighten out the misunderstandings, we intend to distribute the informative papers about Greenland to our members and sympathizers in Denmark.

- Hopefully, everybody will understand that a fight for natural resources and environment is far from being a fight against, say, the Greenland hunter community, Mikael Gylling Nielsen concludes.

Greenland has made an appeal to all European Greenpeace-organizations for support in order that misunderstandings arising from Greenland seal hunt be cleared away, and the hunter culture be given a possibility of survival.

Campaigns against the hunt of seal pups off the coast of Newfoundland have been detrimental to the Greenland hunter only, and he does not even hunt seal pups

The annual campaigns conducted against the hunt of seal pups off the coast of Newfoundland have not influenced the sale of products made from the skin of seal pups, these campaigns have, however, indeed been detrimental to the Greenland hunter whose vital source of income

comes from the sale of skins from adult seals, and mainly from the not-endangered Ringed Seal.

The average prices paid at the Royal Greenland Trade Department semi-annual auctions do indeed prove the point.

The KGH's sealskin-auctions

- Average prices for all Ringed Seals since 1960

		Skins sold	Average-prices in Dkr.
1963	(1. auction)	13.147	160,34
-	(2. auction)	15.148	172,39
1964	1	17.569	166,76
-	2	21.316	146,73
1965	1	32.872	96,00
-	2	26.198	105,06
1966	1	25.365	115,49
-	2	25.493	56,62
1967	1	19.132	60,22
-	2	17.001	71,37
1968	1	24.035	102,41
-	2	15.265	137,56
1969	1	16.507	148,50
-	2	14.780	132,66
1970	1	33.011	138,39
-	÷ no auction	0	0
1971	1	24.646	122,77
-	2	24.395	90,65
1972	1	28.265	123,44
-	2	26.867	166,69
1973	÷ no auction	0	0
-	2	32.809	164,01
1974	1	18.592	209,19
-	2	23.639	209,19
1975	1	18.919	258,53
-	2	26.156	220,65
1976	1	22.279	225,46
-	2	24.874	200,68
1977	1	19.357	123,80
-	2	15.269	63,60
1978	1	20.106	103,91
-	2	23.704	100,36
1979	1	27.792	132,83
-	2	32.224	128,53
1980	1	34.179	144,12
-	2	31.331	173,76
1981	1	34.688	127,29
-	2	26.542	101,33
1982	1	20.147	93,66
-	2	19.048	3,14

(anti-sealskin campaign)

(anti-sealskin campaign)

(anti-sealskin campaign)

Adult seals in fashion again

Increased knowledge of Greenland seal hunt will make an increasing number of environmentally-conscious consumers wear seal-skin coats again, predicts a furrier of international standing.

Sealskin coats will be in fashion again before long.

Finn Birger Christensen, whose fur coats are world-famous, is not in doubt.

- Many people have naturally become insecure because of the many misunderstandings arising from the sealskin-issue, says Finn Birger Christensen, one of the first furriers to stop all purchases of skins from endangered species.

- When people eventually realize that it is possible to be environmentally-conscious while at the same time wearing sealskin coats, such coats will naturally become the fashion again. It is understandable that many people want to make sure their coats are not made of skins from endangered species. But luckily an increasing number of people know that the hunt of adult seals in Greenland is a natural thing, and does not in any way infringe upon the ideal code for animal protection.

Damage to sealskin coats

Finn Birger Christensen has time and again experienced having his shop window broken by stone-throwing action groups believing that they were defending a good cause.

- My customers have also brought in their sealskin coats for repair, when members of action groups have damaged their coats with razor blades, says Finn Birger Christensen, who has never sold sealskin coats made from the skins of seal pups.

- I can easily understand that many customers have become nervous and insecure, but I am happy to say that an increasing number of people are beginning to realize that campaigns against

sealskin coats made from adult seals are a misunderstanding.

Low-priced fur coats

Lambskin coats are generally accepted and low-priced fur coats, and the environmentally-conscious consumer would do well to look at a sealskin coat in the same way.

- The customer can always demand to know what type of sealskin was used for the coat and seal-

skin coats are strong and for everyday-wear, says Finn Birger Christensen anticipating a change of fashion in the course of the next few years.

- Fashion and public opinion often go hand in hand. For many years, long-haired coats have been in fashion, but with the increasing knowledge of sealskin I believe that the Greenland hunter community can take a more optimistic view of the future, concludes Finn Birger Christensen.



This sealskin-coat is made by "Eskimo Pels", Narsaq.

Greenland – an innocent victim

Dramatic years with threats of bodily harm and damage to shops in France, West Germany, Denmark and several other countries have been the consequence for the sealskin trade of ignorance and misunderstandings.

Seal pups are *not* caught off the coasts of Greenland, but the Greenland hunter community has still been suffering because of the international campaigns against the killing of seal pups.

The figures tell the facts. In spite of international campaigns, prices of the seal pup's white-coat has increased considerably in the European market in recent years, whereas prices of adult sealskin from Greenland have dropped drastically. This economic – and for the Greenland hunter community fatal – fact can be proved in cold print:

– On one international sealskin auction after another, we have lately been witnessing that Greenland has become an innocent victim of a cause not even involving Greenland, says S. Levitan, one of the world's largest sealskin merchants, who is exclusively dealing in sealskin from adult seals mainly from Greenland – and not in skins from seal pups.

Misunderstandings and ignorance

This paradoxical and unjust development no doubt originates in many serious misunderstandings arising from seal hunt.

– The opposition to killing of seal pups is indeed an emotionally charged issue, but very few people know anything about seals, says S. Levitan, who has followed the development at close range. Time and again, within the sealskin trade we have experienced that people have no idea of what a seal-pup skin looks like, but on the other hand almost everybody knows the characteristic look of adult sealskins. As the majority of seal pups caught are named *Pagophilus gro-*

enlandicus in Latin – they are mistakenly connected with Greenland. But it is a fact that the Harp Seal only comes to Greenland as summer migrant at an adult age, and the annual take of Harp Seals is very modest.

Threats to lives and shops

Misunderstandings have given the sealskin trade some dramatic years.

– Damage to shops and threats of bodily harm have made many furriers and many shops give up dealing in sealskin coats. In West Germany, France, Denmark and several other countries, we have received threatening letters and had shops smashed by action groups entering the shops and throwing paint over the coats, S. Levitan tells.

– This has naturally entailed an atmosphere of nervousness. Although we all know that it must be a misunderstanding there is very obviously a limit to what the individual dealer dare exposed himself and his personnel to.

In consequence of this, the managements on 3 of West Germany's 6 largest chain shops prohibited the

sale of sealskin from their shops in 1981.

– Many shops have stocks of sealskin coats in their basements because they are afraid to show them in the shops, although these coats are made of sealskins from adult seals, explains S. Levitan.

Guarantees

Violent actions and an often one-sided anti-sealskin propaganda have made many consumers insecure.

– It is very unpleasant when somebody spits in your face, although we all know that it must be a misunderstanding, says S. Levitan, – the sealskin trade naturally sees the point.

– But it is also a fact that skins from seal pups are mainly used for trimmings and coats, whereas sealskin coats are made from adult seals.

– If the consumer wants to know what type of skins were used for the coat, they just have to ask. Anybody with some knowledge of seals can tell the difference, and the consumer naturally has a right to know what he or she is buying, says S. Levitan.



Greenland hunters and EEC



Has our continent of agriculture and industry forgotten its own early history as hunters? asks Finn Lynge, member of the European Parliament for Greenland, below giving an account of the feelings of a Greenlander after EEC's treatment of the sealskin-matter, of inconsistency in environmental matters, of lobbying and letters to Brigitte Bardot.

– What stand does the European Parliament take in the sealskin-matter?

– Few matters have met with such widespread approval in the Parliament as the Environmental Committee's recommendation for an import-embargo on skins from seal pups. The Parliament recommended an import-embargo on the skins in March 1982, awaiting the Commission's further measures.

The Commission's proposal for an import-embargo as at 1 March 1982 was submitted for approval by the session in November 1982,

however, less comprehensive than the original proposal from the Parliament. The Parliament has expressed its disapproval of this change.

– Why does the European Parliament take this stand in the matters of seals and sealskin?

– The Parliament's stand is a reflection of public opinion. But it is my distinct impression, that a large number of members do not have sufficient knowledge of actual conditions.

There is a widespread belief that the stock of seals is endangered

everywhere, and this is actually not the case – it is neither true of the Harp Seal nor the Hooded Seal, and it is the skins from these 2 species that we are referring to here. Many people still believe that the pups are flayed alive – they certainly are not. Furthermore papers are constantly appearing telling of savage “killing methods” – because clubbing is believed to be especially savage. But the actual fact is that the killing of seal pups is both better controlled by veterinary standards and more human than many of the killing methods employed by various European slaughterhouses – or for that matter all over the world.

The Inconsistent Stand taken by the Parliament

– But you have supported the Environmental Committee’s proposal for an import-embargo on skins from seal pups?

– What I did was to support that the proposal should contain a built-in exception applying to all skins from Greenland and Inuit-catch as such. I have not voted for the proposal. I must point out that the question of seal pups has nothing to do with Greenland. We do not kill, eat nor sell seal pups in Greenland. But as the campaign has been of negative consequence for the sale of our skins from adult seals, I have supported the Parliament in its report distinctly underlining that this problem has nothing to do with Greenland.

– If Greenland is an exception, what is the problem then?

– The problem is in part inconsistency and in part a failure to understand other cultures. Had the European Parliament been consistent, the consequence would have been the tabling of a recommendation for an import-embargo on New Zealand mutton, because of non-acceptance of the methods employed when lambs are slaughtered in New Zealand. Similar methods are used by Canadians and Norwegians in Newfoundland, you see.

But this is not done – there has been no collection of signatures opposing this. I think that we have to face the fact that the Parliament

has not been objective in the sealskin-matter.

Constant Flow of Information is necessary

– And what have you yourself done in the Parliament in connection with the sealskin-matter?

– My principal duty is attempting to protect the interests of my electorate. As things are now, Greenlandic seal hunters are not directly affected by the recommended import-embargo. This was actually also underlined in the Parliament’s report, as already mentioned.

One of the reasons is our discussions in the Environmental Committee of which I am a member,



where I have pointed to the needs and rights of the Greenland seal hunters.

In addition, I have shown films about the Greenland seal hunt and arranged a press meeting in Strasbourg on the topic of seal hunt.

One of the participants in the press meeting was the Minister of Trade and Industry, Fisheries and Hunting (member of the Greenland Home Rule Government) as well as the Managing Director of the Royal Greenland Trade Department.

Finally, I have written to both Greenpeace International and to Brigitte Bardot for support to Greenland seal hunters – and I have contacted the Dutch Government, because of its national import-embargo on all types of sealskin.

My letter to Brigitte Bardot has not been answered. But the Dutch Government has decided to add an

exemption clause applying to Greenland seal skins.

– Do you have other alternatives?

– At intervals, I have asked the Commission to voice its stand in the sealskin-matter – and I shall continue to do so. Apart from this, I feel that my most important job in the European Parliament will be straightforward and persistent lobbying- and information activities.

A Culture-gap

– Do you think that the Parliament will continue to work for a general import-embargo on all types of sealskin from now on?

– I certainly do not hope so. It would be completely unreasonable. I feel that it is safe to say that seals belong to the least endangered species in the whole world. It would be just as reasonable trying to forbid the sale of shoes or bags made of oxhide. The cow is not on the point of being extinct either?

– Where do you come up against the greatest difficulty, when voicing Greenlandic views in the Parliament?

– It is very easy to say – the cultural gap. Europe – the continent of agriculture and industry – seems all in all completely to have forgotten mankind’s long prehistory as hunters. This has not happened in Greenland.

Europeans simply cannot understand this unless they travel the long way to see it with their own eyes.

In all fairness, it should be added that those who come to Greenland with the actual intention of seeing and understanding they do change their attitude.

They understand that this is a question of respecting a culture different from other cultures on its own premisses. Unfortunately, very few people take the trouble.

To us, the sealskin-matter has become an example of one culture trying to force its standards on all of us – and for no relevant reason at all. It has already been highly detrimental to our hunters – and we shall continue to fight against this injustice, wherever and whenever it is possible, Finn Lynge concludes.

Greenland Home Rule

Viewed from abroad, the Greenland Home Rule is a unique system of local autonomy exercised by an original population.

With the introduction of Home Rule in Greenland, a new leaf was turned in the unique and fascinating history of Greenland.

Until 1953, Greenland was a Danish crown colony. The Greenlandic population was living in decentralized hunter communities, centrally governed from Denmark. Greenland was a closed country, actually controlled by the Royal Greenland Trade Department with its complete monopoly of supply, trade and traffic to and from Greenland as well as in Greenland.

In 1953, by an amendment of the Danish Constitution, Greenland was formally made an equal and integral part of Denmark, and it was decided to open Greenland and develop it into a modern society with fishing as its principal occupation instead of the traditional hunting.

The Greenlanders were granted 2 seats in the Danish Parliament (Folketing), and their own popularly elected assembly *The Provincial Council* was only to be advisory to the Danish authorities.

Two decades of change followed. During the 1950s and 1960s, the Greenland society was completely transformed. In some selected towns on the Greenland west coast, factories were built and many settlements were closed down to concentrate the population in these towns. The hunters were to be wage-earners and consumers in a modern industrialized Greenland. Young Greenlanders were to be taught Danish by Danish teachers in new schools and not their own native tongue Greenlandic. For if this was not done, the Greenlanders were thought not to be able to manage.

Hospitals were also built to put an end to the widespread TB, and houses and multi-storey buildings were rising everywhere to accommodate the many new arrivals.

Denmark paid for all of it, but the

majority of labour employed was in fact Danish and Danish enterprises profited from the work done.

The goal was a quick shift of the Greenlandic society to a completely new starting point to achieve a society in economic balance – some day. Two different wage systems were consequently introduced, one system for manpower from Denmark, Danes, and one for local manpower, Greenlanders. The reason was that a transfer of the Danish wage level to Greenland was believed to entail a never-balancing economy in Greenland.

On Greenland's conditions

In the decades following the second World War, the so-called new "reform" was introduced as a result of opinions voiced by several commissions and many experts. The following description is only very summary and not detailed. But it is a fact that the Greenlanders themselves had no say in the development of their country. Anyhow, this was the way many Greenlanders felt, and many social



Members of the Home Rule Parliament in white gala-anoraks on their way to church before the session of the Parliament.

problems followed in the wake because of the impact on the society of these very rapid and profound innovations. This was indeed a radical culture shift or an attempt at a culture shift by which the hunter culture, Greenlandic language and mentality, Greenlandic upbringing of children and the local spirit of solidarity in the settlements were either wiped out or made unimportant, well, the old way of living was actually looked upon as damaging to the new future in store for Greenland.

At the beginning of the 1970s, frustrations came out in the open. Displeasure had long been voiced between Greenlanders themselves and now some Danish voices were also heard.

Demands were made for a Greenland on Greenland's conditions. Dissociation was taken from the role as spectator, from a humiliating difference in wage levels, from Danish as teaching language, from being forced to go to Denmark for further education, from being forced to give up the hunter occupation with all its traditions, from a policy of concentration and from a feeling of being controlled.

Instead demands were made for co-determination, and it was openly said that the equality of rights acquired in 1953 actually meant a wiping out of Greenlandic culture, as Greenlanders were expected to become Danes and could not continue to be themselves.

In 1971, young politicians holding these views were elected to the Provincial Council and the Danish Parliament. The showdown with Danish reform policy was now politically voiced and the result was a demand for increased local autonomy.

Home Rule

These new tunes from Greenland gradually evoked a response from Denmark. The general attitude in Denmark had so far been that everything possible had been done for Greenland. Some even openly expressed bitterness because Greenlanders criticized conditions instead of showing gratefulness. Others gradually came to realize that you should not develop a country without involving its population.



Meeting in the parliamentary Hall in Nuuk (Godthåb).

In the middle of the 1970s, the result was the setting up by the Danish Socialdemocratic Government of a *Home Rule Commission* and for the first time, the majority of members were not Danish but an equal number of Danish and Greenlandic politicians. The Commission came up with a recommendation for an entirely new legislation applying to Greenland.

The population in Greenland (about 40.000 Greenlanders and 10.000 Danes) were to be given powers to decide their own affairs. There was not completely agreement on all matters, a point of dispute being the Danish Government's refusal to recognize Greenland's right to its subsoil, but Greenland was granted the right to veto any type of resource extraction.

Danish and Greenlandic politicians were, however, in agreement on most issues, and in January 1979 Home Rule was adopted by a popular vote in Greenland, and shortly after by an enactment of the Danish Parliament.

Greenland should continue to be part of the Kingdom of Denmark, but as in the case of the Faroe islands since the 1940s, Greenland should be given very wide local autonomy within the frames of the

Commonwealth of Denmark. Under the Greenland Home Rule Act, Denmark was to be in charge of foreign policy, defence, police service and administration of justice.

Denmark accepted a transfer of the usual amount of capital to Greenland, however in future as a block grant to the Home Rule Authorities for the sectors having been taken over by these Authorities.

The plan was that the Greenland Home Rule Authorities – according to an agreed time-table – were to take over complete legislative power within the following fields: culture, language, media, church, education, economy, labour market, trade and industry, fishing and hunting, social welfare, the Royal Greenland Trade Department, building activities, country planning and taxation.

Greenland was thus given Home Rule within the frames of the Commonwealth of Denmark, a Home Rule which in its extent and powers is unique compared with the achievements of other original populations and minorities all over the world.

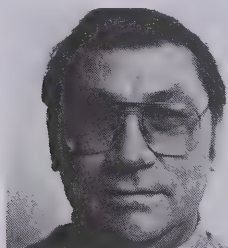
In April 1979, the first election was held to the Greenland Home Rule Parliament (the Landsting),

the winner being the Siumut-party (i.e. progress) with its 13 of the total of 21 seats in the Parliament. The Atassut-party (i.e. solidarity) being Greenland's other dominating political group won 8 seats.

And this was the birth of Greenlandic autonomy within the Kingdom of Denmark.

The new system

The Greenland Home Rule legislative assembly, the Parliament (the Landsting) elects the Greenland Home Rule Government (the Landsstyre). The Siumut-party chose to let the Home Rule Government be composed of 5 Departments, each headed by a Minister being a member of the Home Rule Government:

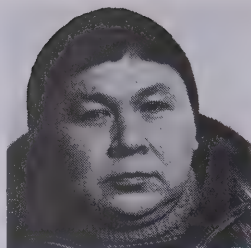


The Premier of the Home Rule Government (Jonathan Motzfeldt) is head of both Home Rule Government (the Landsstyre) and the Home Rule Parliament (the Landsting) as well as head of the central administration of the Home Rule, the Secretariat.

The Premier is directly responsible for Home Rule economy, relations with Greenland's 18 municipalities and thereby also relations with other countries.



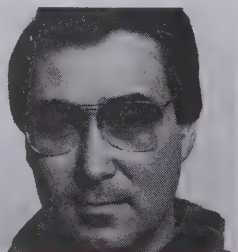
Minister of Social Welfare (Moses Olsen), deputy-chairman of the Home Rule Government and thus also of the Home Rule Parliament. Head of the Department of Social Welfare and responsible for all social legislation in Greenland including housing policy and policy on spirits.



Minister of Trade and Industry, Fisheries and Hunting (Lars Emil Johansen). Head of the Department of Trade and Industry and responsible for labour market, vocational training, animal and mineral resources, traffic and tourism, including the take-over of state-conducted fisheries and fish factories.



Minister of Culture and Education (Thue Christiansen). Head of the Department of Culture and Education and responsible for Greenlandic culture and language, the Greenlandic media, museums, high schools, the Folkeskole (9-year-compulsory school system) and the Greenland Teacher Training College.



Minister of Settlements and Country Districts (Anders Andreassen). Head of the Department of Settlements and Country Districts and responsible for the development within these fields and for solving their special problems, not least including the traditional hunter occupation which is still going strong despite of the development within the last two decades.

Each of the Departments has a competent administration with both Greenlandic and Danish officials.

The Home Rule Administration is situated in Greenland's capital Nuuk (formerly Godthåb), several other Home Rule Institutions are situated elsewhere in Greenland.

The Greenland Home Rule has a special office in the Danish capital Copenhagen in Denmark.

Greenland Home Rule powers and thereby administration are gradually being extended with the taking over of new fields. The Home Rule Authorities thus expect to take over the state-conducted fish factories and trawlers in 1984-85, whereas the health sector will have to wait till sometime in the future.

There is already plenty to do and the "Greenlandising" is already being carried through within many fields. The Greenland Home Rule Parliament (the Landsting) is in session twice a year - in spring and autumn - and during each session a series of legislative measures are taken and existing legislation revised.

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CANADA

Geography, population, language

Greenland – the world's biggest island – belongs to the American continent, separated in the north by the Nares Strait which at its narrowest is no more than 26 kilometres across. Greenland's geographical position has been of significance to its historical development, as the country's very first settlers came from west.

Greenland's northernmost point, Cape Morris Jessup, lies only 740 kilometres from the North Pole and the southernmost point, Cape Farewell, lies on the same latitude as the capital of Norway (Oslo). The country stretches more than 2.670 kilometres from north to south and 1.050 kilometres from east to west with a total area of 2.175.600 square kilometres, the ice-free zone is, however, less than 341.700 square kilometres. The coast line is about 39.100 kilometres. The highest point is "Gubbjorn Fjeld" in East Greenland (3.733 metres).

The climate is arctic but extremely varied. Naturally the country's enormous extent – from the frozen arctic ocean in the north down to the North Atlantic ocean in the south influenced by the warm Gulf Stream, and the



1.822.900 square kilometres large and about 2.7 kilometres thick ice cap – gives climatic differences.

There are currently 133 inhabited areas in Greenland i.e. 18 towns, 99 settlements and 16 landing grounds, weather stations etc., the majority situated in the middle part of West Greenland.

The largest town is the capital of Nuuk (Godthåb) with its about 11.000 inhabitants.

The language is Greenlandic originating in the Eskimo-language spoken in North Canada, Alaska,

on the east point of Sibiria and in Greenland. The language has been influenced by centuries-old relations with Denmark with the consequence that Danish loanwords have been "greenlandised". The language of to-day may be divided into the East Greenlandic dialect, the West Greenlandic dialect and the polar Eskimo-dialect. Danish is spoken by a large proportion of the population, and Danish is also a compulsory subject in Greenland's schools.

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Greenland Seals

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What do you know about Greenland?

- That we form the largest Inuit-community
- That many of us are still completely dependent on sealing?
- That for thousands of years we have lived in harmony with nature?
- That we combine ancient culture with modern development based on a steadily growing fishing fleet?
- That our whole existence is based on living marine resources?
- That an increasing number of tourists come to visit us?
- That we are connected to Europe and North America by regular flights?

If you want to know more about Greenland, please contact:

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